The Cat Brain

With Semantics

(and Why It Matters)

Humans like to think of themselves as minds. Lofty, symbolic, tragically intelligent. But zoom out a little and the picture gets awkward. What we mostly are is a warm-blooded animal with a spine, a digestive system, and a brain that panics when lunch is late.

The only twist is that this brain learned language and now narrates its discomfort

like it’s writing philosophy.

Picture a cat. The cat is tired. The cat is hungry. The cat is slightly cold. Does the cat conclude that existence is meaningless? No. The cat relocates. Or screams. Or sleeps. Efficient. No footnotes.
Now give the cat semantics. Suddenly the same sensations acquire explanations. Hunger becomes “a loss of

motivation." Pain becomes "a deep existential fatigue." Low blood sugar becomes "a sense that the world is fundamentally hostile." The sensations haven't changed. Only the story did. The cat didn't become wiser. It became articulate.

This is where most human thinking actually lives: not in reason, but in narration. The body sends a signal. The brain interprets it. Language

steps in and dresses it up. Voilà—an opinion is born.

We love to believe thoughts come first and the body follows. That belief survives because it flatters us. Unfortunately, biology did not get the memo. Pain hijacks attention. Sleep loss warps judgment. Hunger shrinks empathy. Relief restores generosity. These aren't metaphors. They're control knobs.

Give a human a bad back and little sleep and they'll produce a worldview. Give them protein, rest, and warmth and the worldview mysteriously softens. Same person. Same intelligence. Different internal climate.

This is why stimulants feel heroic and nourishment feels boring. Coffee shouts "perform." Protein whispers "stabilize." One creates

motion. The other creates continuity. Modern culture worships motion. Continuity doesn't trend.

So we end up with institutions run by caffeinated cats in suits, hissing at spreadsheets, mistaking urgency for insight. Meetings where everyone is slightly underfed, slightly stressed, slightly convinced they're having Important Thoughts. Social

media is just this dynamic at scale: millions of cat brains with semantics, live-streaming their cortisol.

Destructive thought loops thrive here. They feel profound because they repeat. Repetition masquerades as depth when energy is low. The mind circles the same idea not because it's true, but because it's cheap. Like a cat pacing the same two tiles when it

can’t sleep.

Feed the body and the loops weaken. Not because the thoughts were disproven, but because they lost their leverage. They still exist. They’re just quieter. Demoted from “absolute truth” to “background noise.” This is deeply insulting to certain philosophies.

And that’s why it matters.

If we confuse physiological distress with insight, we build cultures around it. We reward people who can speak fluently while dysregulated. We mistake agitation for seriousness. We canonize exhaustion. We design systems that keep everyone just uncomfortable enough to keep talking, posting, reacting.

Meanwhile, the cat remains unimpressed.

The cat does not care about your argument. The cat cares whether the environment is safe enough to stop screaming internally. Only then does curiosity show up. Only then does play appear. Only then does thinking become exploratory instead of defensive.

This isn't anti-intellectual. It's anti-delusion.

The highest form of thought is not produced by a starving, hurting, overstimulated organism narrating its distress. It's produced when the organism is regulated enough that thought doesn't have to justify its own existence.

The scandal is simple: most of what passes for "deep thinking" is just a cat asking for better conditions, but in complete sentences.

Feed the cat. Support the spine. Lower the noise. Semantics will follow, calmer and less dramatic. Truth doesn't arrive as a thunderclap. It shows up when the body stops flinching.

The cat doesn't want meaning. It wants conditions under which meaning stops yelling.